

HERITAGE MAKERS

Derry Public Library

Centennial Celebration



August 9 & 10, 2005

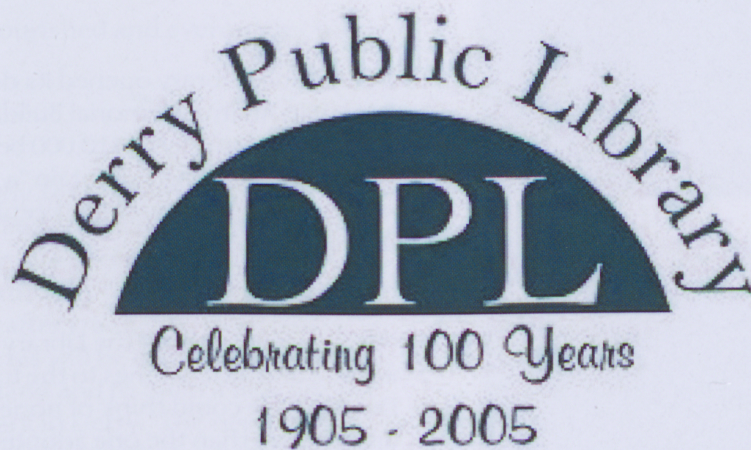


For Reference

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Derry Public Library

Centennial Celebration



August 9 & 10, 2005

DERRY PUBLIC LIBRARY
64 E. BROADWAY
DERRY, NH 03038

Honoring the past...



On August 10, 2005, the Derry Public Library reached a 100 year milestone. After almost a year of planning, the Centennial festivities were held at the Library, in MacGregor Park and at the Adams Memorial Building. This is a record of the celebration and recognition of 100 years of service to the community.

Derry Public Library opened its doors in the Benjamin Adams Memorial Building on August 10, 1905. Adams left a \$10,000 bequest to the town – the building to contain “a public hall” and “suitable rooms for the keeping of the town library.”



“It was necessary that the Library should have a name and as it belongs to the town of Derry . . . we could think of none more appropriate than the one adopted, ‘The Derry Public Library.’ Trustees of the Derry Public Library, 1906”

The Reverend William E. Gaskin, a Universalist minister, was appointed librarian. Rev. Gaskin resigned six months later and his daughter, Elsie, became Director of the Library. She held the position until 1940.

The library flourished and eventually outgrew its quarters.

In 1923 wealthy Texas businessman, Henry F. MacGregor, died at his summer residence in Londonderry. MacGregor had made his name and fortune in Texas, having moved there shortly after graduating from Pinkerton Academy. In his will he instructed his widow to purchase land and to build a new library and public park in Derry. The new building, adjacent to MacGregor Park, was formally dedicated on January 14, 1927.





Historic Preservation Projects

A feature of the MacGregor building was the unusual tapestry brick fireplace donated by longtime Director Elsie Gaskin Griffin. In 2005 restoring the fireplace to working condition became a focus of the Library's Centennial Fundraising Project, resulting in EnergyNorth's donation of a gas log fireplace insert. A generous donation from the East Derry Rotary Club funded the installation.



Fabrication of a custom fireplace screen was donated by the library's current director, Cheryl Lynch.

This restores the fireplace, as Elsie Gaskin probably intended, as a "community hearth" for Derry Public Library patrons.



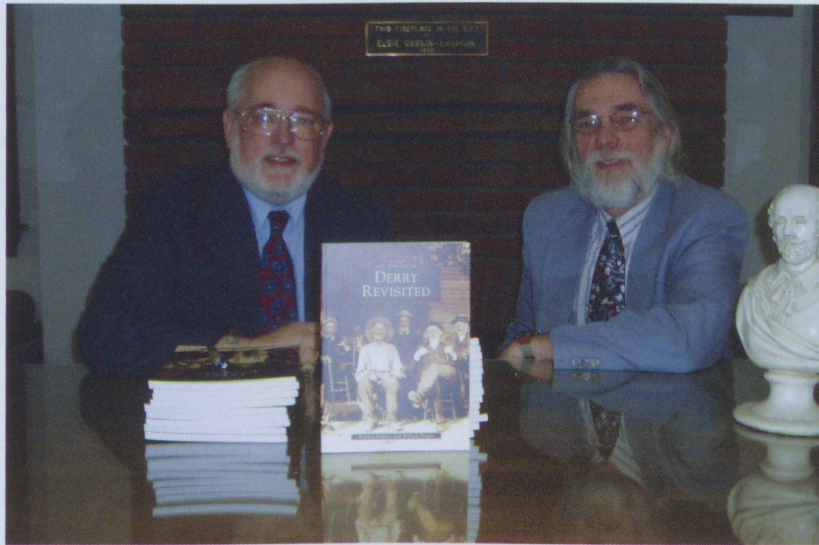


A stained glass window depicting the MacGregor coat of arms was installed in the library as a memorial to Henry. Centennial fundraising resulted in the restoration of the American opalescent glass stained glass window by Lynn Hovey Studios through a grant from the New Hampshire Council on the Arts as well as many private donations.

As Derry's population grew, so did the need for an expanded library. In 1977 the Board of Trustees obtained a federal grant of \$25,000 for a Children's Room in the basement of the library. Then in 1989, Paul Collette, Derry's first mayor, became the driving force behind a \$2.3 million expansion project. The architectural firm of Ingram-Wallace of Manchester designed a 15,000 square foot addition, which opened on March 8, 1990.



Derry Public Library, 1905-2005



Planning started for the Centennial Celebration with a brainstorming session. A group of prominent Derry residents and library supporters met to discuss plans for a 100th year "birthday" celebration. The theme "Honoring the Past, Preparing for the Future" was selected.

Starting in January 2005, the Library sponsored diverse guest speakers and displays relating to local and regional history. The NH Quilt Documentation Project held sessions at the library, and a book signing was held to commemorate the publication of "Derry Revisited" by local historians Richard Holmes and William Dugan.

Centennial Days!

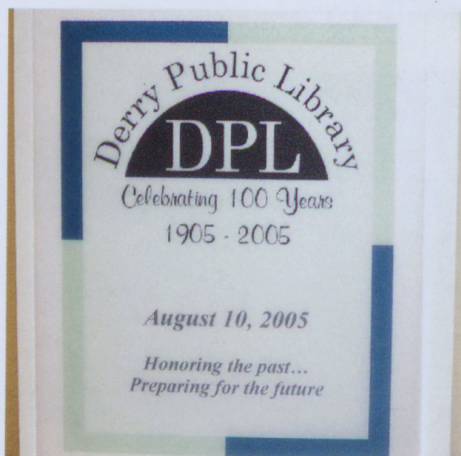


After several months of preparation, the two-day Derry Public Library Centennial Celebration took place on August 9 and 10, 2005. The Library worked with the Derry Parks and Recreation Department to schedule a "Granite Statesmen Barbershop Chorus" concert in MacGregor Park adjacent to the Library.

Hood Dairy, having played a prominent role in Derry's history, sponsored a free "ice cream social" featuring their new Champions Ice Cream. Ice cream cups were distributed from the back of an HP Hood truck and volunteers from the Friends of Derry Public Libraries distributed cake bearing the Library's newly adopted logo.

A large banner, also donated by the Friends, hung over Broadway to announce the events.

Events at the Adams Memorial Building



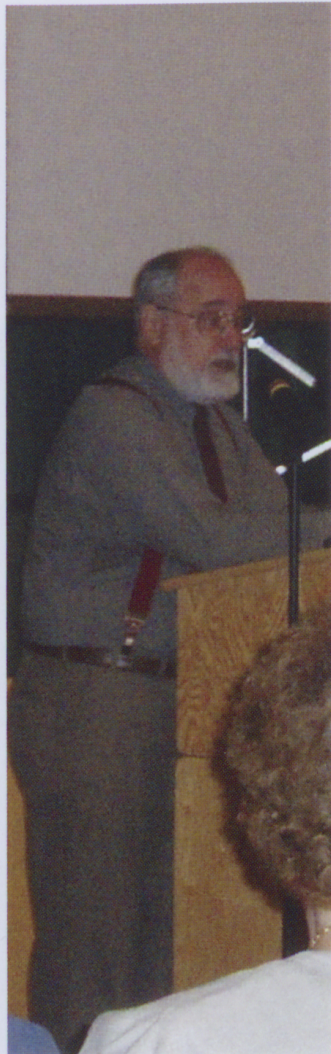
Handcrafted invitations, designed and assembled by the staff and teen volunteers, were sent to former directors, NH libraries, and other special guests.

As attendees entered the Opera House auditorium, the "Centennial String Quartet," comprised of musicians from Londonderry High School, performed while 71 guests mingled and enjoyed refreshments served by the Friends.

An Honor Guard from the Derry Fire Department opened the celebration with a flag ceremony and Pledge of Allegiance.

Following an introduction by Master of Ceremonies Jack Robillard, Assistant Director of the Library, town historian Rick Holmes gave an outstanding and often humorous talk about the history of the Library.

Then keynote speaker Tom Frey, Senior Futurist and Executive Director of the DaVinci Institute in Louisville, Colorado, presented an illustrated talk on the future of libraries in the 21st century.





Elizabeth Ives, former Trustee and prominent advocate for public libraries, was honored with a plaque recognizing her contribution to the Library, to Derry, and for her leadership in supporting libraries throughout New Hampshire.



Tom Frey



Rick Holmes

Cheryl Lynch



Jack Robillard



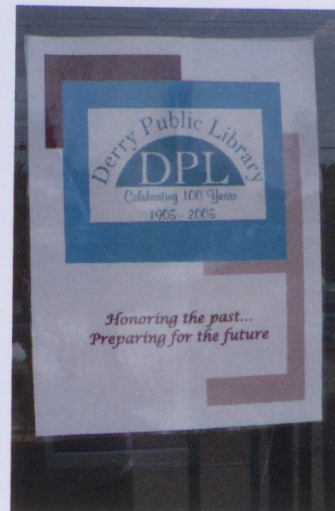
Events at the Library

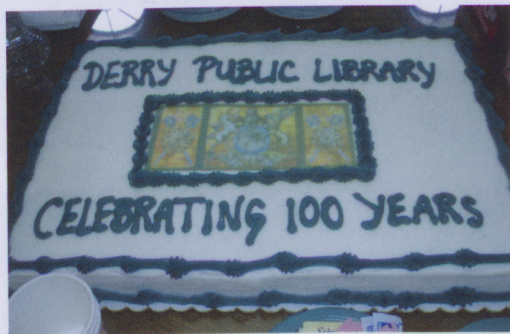


After closing remarks, the assembly was invited to parade from the Adams Building to a reception at the Derry Public Library. Led by bagpiper James Lundt, the crowd was assisted crossing Crystal Avenue by an officer from the Derry Police Department.

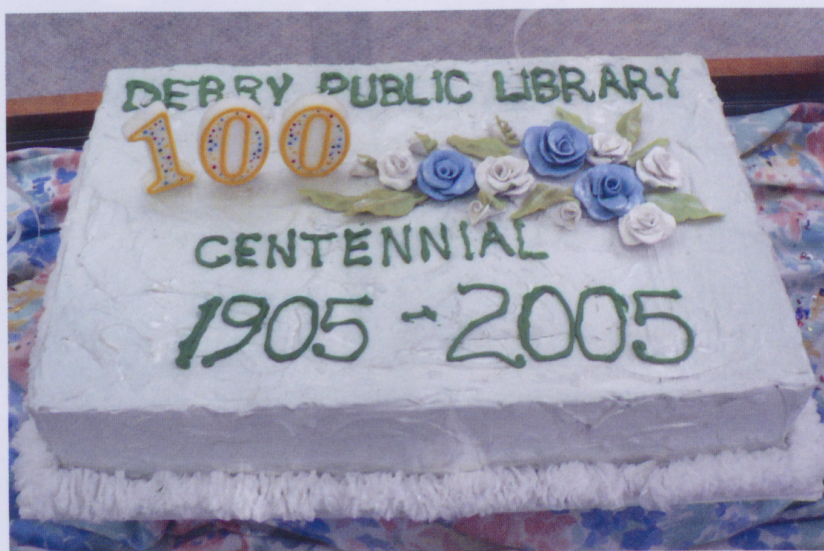
Library Director Cheryl Lynch symbolized the jubilant mood of the event by parading in a birthday candle hat. Rick Holmes, with a jaunty tartan hat, and bagpiper James Lundt paid homage to our patron Henry MacGregor's Scottish heritage.

A ribbon cutting at the entrance to the library symbolized the advent of the next 100 years and guests were welcomed to a reception inside the library.









A sheet cake with an image of the library's historic stained glass window presided over tables of punch, fresh fruit, crackers, dip, and cheese. A "fake cake" (with real candles) created by staff had resided in a showcase for a month as an enticement to the actual event.

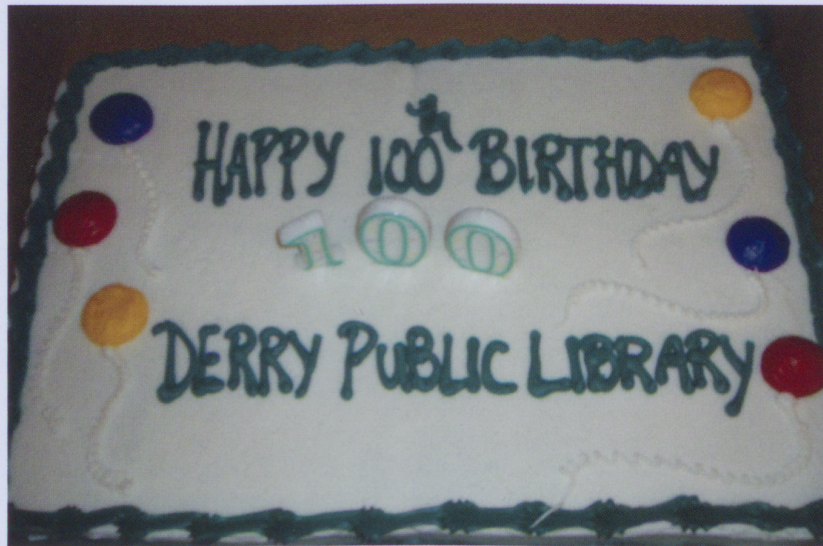
Garden and wildflowers brought in and arranged by staff brightened the tables.

Local Cable Television Channel 17 videotaped the two days of celebration and the Library received many compliments from viewers who saw the broadcasts.

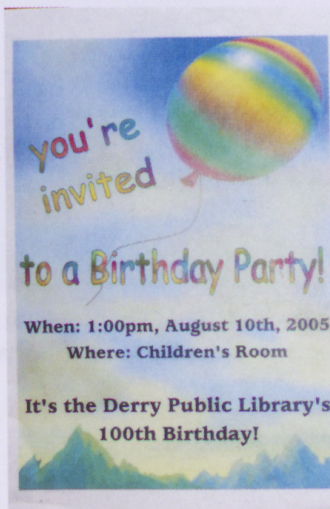




Children's Department "Birthday Party"



In the afternoon, over a hundred children and parents attended a "birthday party" (with a fourth sheet cake!) for the library, many bringing cards and presents of supplies (markers, crayons, craft materials) for the Children's Room.



3 Voices



To conclude the Derry Public Library Centennial festivities, a special program was offered. In the evening "3 Voices," a performance group comprised of the ever-popular folklorist writer Rebecca Rule, author Diana Durham, and poet Maren Tirabassi presented a program called "The Rock, The Grail and the Wardrobe" which featured poetry, anecdotes, and storytelling. An audience of 31 enjoyed it greatly.



Our Thanks



ImageAbility of Londonderry donated enhanced enlargements of two historic photographs showing the buildings in which the Library has been housed - the Adams Memorial Building and the original MacGregor building.

News coverage on the front page of the Derry News and Eagle Tribune and the front of the second section of the Union Leader was outstanding! Proclamations from the Governor, the NH Senate and House of Representatives marked the event.

The Library is grateful to all those who made the event a success, including the Library's staff, Trustees, Friends, volunteers, civic organizations, financial contributors, patrons, and attendees.

...Preparing for the future.

At the time of our centennial we are housed in a 23,000 square foot facility with more than 90,000 books, plus many other materials including compact music discs, books on audiotape & compact discs, and digital video discs. Online access includes our catalog system, an active World Wide Web site with access to subscription research databases and links to many online resources.

As we go to press nearly one year later, plans are being finalized for the library's participation in the NH Downloadable Audiobooks Project; the Children's Room is in full swing with their summer reading program entitled "Treasure Reading," featuring pirate themed activities and programs; and the staff continues to serve our community with over 900 patrons through the door on one recent memorable day.

As we close the book on our Centennial we wonder --

What will the Derry Public Library be like in 2105?



www.heritagemakers.com/152649



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Derry Public Library



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Derry Public Library :
centennial celebration.
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Derry Public Library
DPL
Celebrating 100 Years
1905 - 2005

"Honoring the Past, Preparing for the Future"

The Derry Public Library would like to thank patron June Butka for the generous donation of this book.

Photographs are by Barbara Ellingwood, Cheryl Senter, Sherry Bailey, Maryle Zusman, and Jack Robillard.